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## **NACo honors Cumberland County as a national leader in creating sustainable communities**

### *NACo award recognizes counties for enhancing communities*

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – The National Association of Counties (NACo) announced the winners of its 2005-2006 Center for Sustainable Communities Awards during its recent Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C.

The awards, presented by NACo's Center for Sustainable Communities, recognize the most effective and innovative county-led partnerships with private sector, faith-based or community groups in developing economically prosperous, environmentally safe, and socially equitable communities.

Cumberland County, N.C. and the Cumberland County Business Council were recognized for how the county is leveraging the military through the base realignment and closure process for economic development. Ft. Bragg and Pope Air Force Base have a \$7.5 billion annual economic impact on the community, but the community had not taken full advantage of this economic behemoth. The program's goal is to leverage the military for economic growth. The county aimed to increase their share of military contracts, integrate transitioning military personnel and military family members into the civilian workforce, and recruit businesses that provide products or services to the military to the county.

"I commend everyone involved in developing this outstanding community partnership," said NACo President Bill Hansell, Umatilla County (Ore.) Commissioner. "It is our hope that this national award will spotlight your community's great achievement and inspire others across the country to explore similar strategies to develop vibrant, sustainable communities."

The 12 communities honored were chosen by an expert panel of public and private sector leaders through a two-stage judging process.

Honorees will receive their awards during the 2005-2006 Sustainable Communities Awards Presentation Ceremony and Reception, 6-9 p.m., Thursday, April 27, at the Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill, 400 New Jersey Ave., NW, Washington, D.C. The event is part of National County Government week April 23-29. In addition, the Center

will announce three Outstanding Practice recipients (\$5,000 award) and one Platinum Innovation community recipient (\$10,000 award) in recognition of their accomplishments in sustainable community development.

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*NACo is a full-service organization that provides legislative, research, technical and public affairs assistance to county governments. Created in 1935, NACo continues to ensure that the nation's 3,066 counties are heard and understood in the White House and Congress. [www.naco.org](http://www.naco.org)*